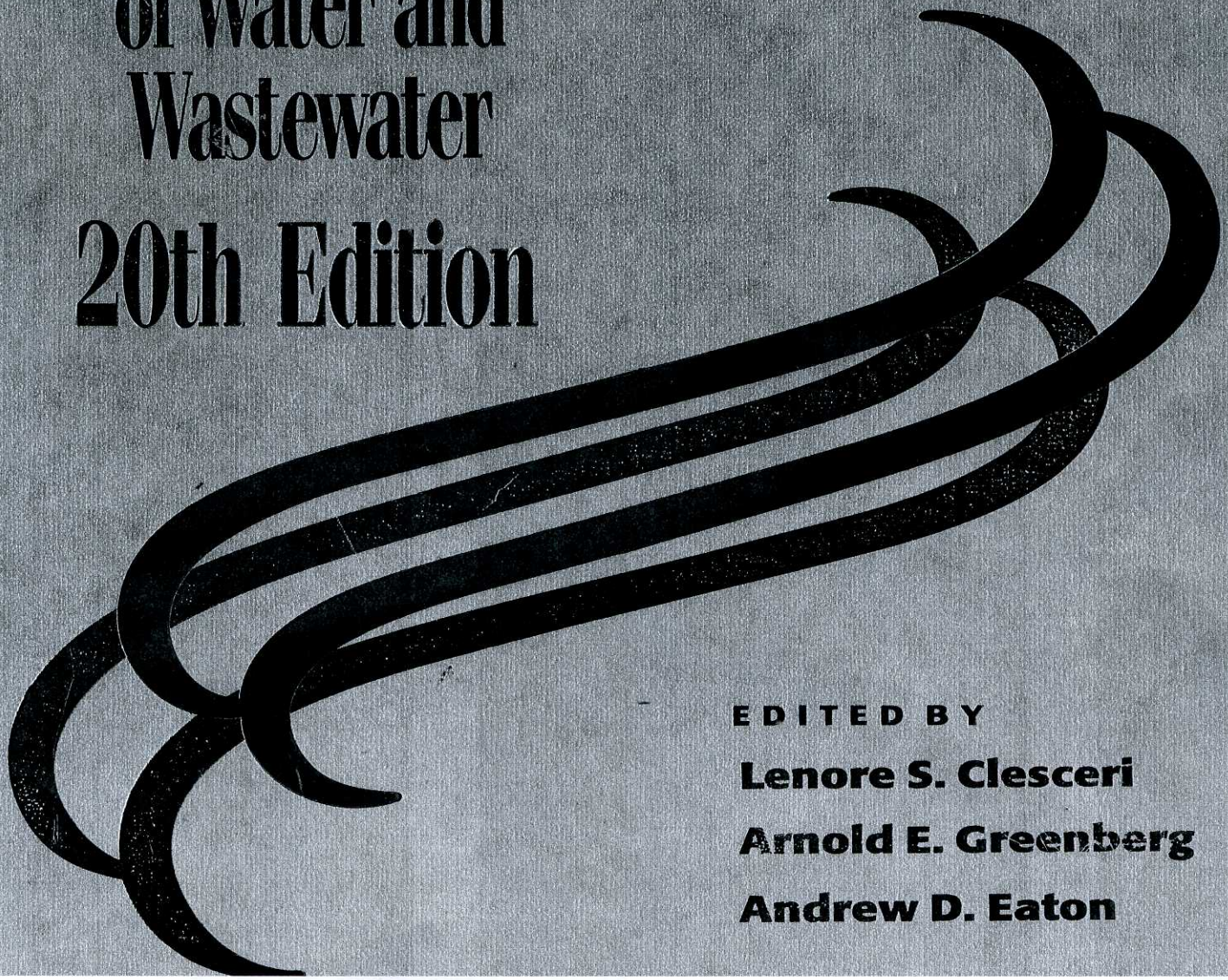
Standard Methods

FOR THE

Examination of Water and Wastewater

20th Edition



EDITED BY

Lenore S. Clesceri

Arnold E. Greenberg

Andrew D. Eaton

figures, puts the limit on the number of places that justifiably may be carried in the sum or difference. Thus the sum

```
   0.0072
  12.02
   4.0078
  25.9
4886
------
4927.9350
```

must be rounded off to "4928," no decimals, because one of the addends, 4886, has no decimal places. Notice that another addend, 25.9, has only three significant figures and yet it does not set a limit to the number of significant figures in the answer.

The preceding discussion is necessarily oversimplified. The reader is referred to mathematical texts for more detailed discussion.

1060 COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF SAMPLES

1060 A. Introduction

It is an old axiom that the result of any testing method can be no better than the sample on which it is performed. It is beyond the scope of this publication to specify detailed procedures for the collection of all samples because of varied purposes and analytical procedures. Detailed information is presented in specific methods. This section presents general considerations, applicable primarily to chemical analyses. See appropriate sections for samples to be used in toxicity testing and microbiological, biological, and radiological examinations.

The objective of sampling is to collect a portion of material small enough in volume to be transported conveniently and yet large enough for analytical purposes while still accurately representing the material being sampled. This objective implies that the relative proportions or concentrations of all pertinent components will be the same in the samples as in the material being sampled, and that the sample will be handled in such a way that no significant changes in composition occur before the tests are made.

Frequently the objective of sampling and testing is to demonstrate whether continuing compliance with specific regulatory requirements has been achieved. Samples are presented to the laboratory for specific determinations with the sampler being responsible for collecting a valid and representative sample. Because of the increasing importance placed on verifying the accuracy and representativeness of data, greater emphasis is placed on proper sample collection, tracking, and preservation techniques. Often, laboratory personnel help in planning a sampling program, in consultation with the user of the test results. Such consultation is essential to ensure selecting samples and analytical methods that provide a sound and valid basis for answering the questions that prompted the sampling and that will meet regulatory and/or project-specific requirements.

This section addresses the collection and preservation of water and wastewater samples; the general principles also apply to the sampling of solid or semisolid matrices.

1. General Requirements

Obtain a sample that meets the requirements of the sampling program and handle it so that it does not deteriorate or become contaminated or compromised before it is analyzed.

Ensure that all sampling equipment is clean and quality-assured before use. Use sample containers that are clean and free of contaminants. Bake at 450°C all bottles to be used for organic-analysis sampling.

Fill sample containers without prerinsing with sample; prerinsing results in loss of any pre-added preservative and sometimes can bias results high when certain components adhere to the sides of the container. Depending on determinations to be performed, fill the container full (most organic compound determinations) or leave space for aeration, mixing, etc. (microbiological and inorganic analyses). If a bottle already contains preservative, take care not to overfill the bottle, as preservative may be lost or diluted. Except when sampling for analysis of volatile organic compounds, leave an air space equivalent to approximately 1% of the container volume to allow for thermal expansion during shipment.

Special precautions (discussed below) are necessary for samples containing organic compounds and trace metals. Because many constituents may be present at low concentrations (micrograms or nanograms per liter), they may be totally or partially lost or easily contaminated when proper sampling and preservation procedures are not followed.

Composite samples can be obtained by collecting over a period of time, depth, or at many different sampling points. The details of collection vary with local conditions, so specific recommendations are not universally applicable. Sometimes it is more informative to analyze numerous separate samples instead of one composite so that variability, maxima, and minima can be determined.

Because of the inherent instability of certain properties and compounds, composite sampling for some analytes is not recommended where quantitative values are desired (examples include oil and grease, acidity, alkalinity, carbon dioxide, chlorine residual, iodine, hexavalent chromium, nitrate, volatile organic compounds, radon-222, dissolved oxygen, ozone, temperature, and pH). In certain cases, such as for BOD, composite samples are routinely required by regulatory agencies. Refrigerate composite samples for BOD and nitrite.

Sample carefully to ensure that analytical results represent the actual sample composition. Important factors affecting results are the presence of suspended matter or turbidity, the method chosen for removing a sample from its container, and the physical and

ples, or near sampling locations; always wash hands thoroughly before handling food.[2]

Always prohibit eating, drinking, or smoking near samples, sampling locations, and in the laboratory. Keep sparks, flames, and excessive heat sources away from samples and sampling locations. If flammable compounds are suspected or known to be present and samples are to be refrigerated, use only specially designed *explosion-proof* refrigerators.[2]

Collect samples safely, avoiding situations that may lead to accidents. When in doubt as to the level of safety precautions needed, consult a knowledgeable industrial hygienist or safety professional. Samples with radioactive contaminants may require other safety considerations; consult a health physicist.

Label adequately any sample known or suspected to be hazardous because of flammability, corrosivity, toxicity, oxidizing chemicals, or radioactivity, so that appropriate precautions can be taken during sample handling, storage, and disposal.

3. References

1. Forsberg K. & L.H. Keith. 1998. Instant Gloves and CPC Database. Instant Reference Sources, Inc. Austin, Tex.
2. Water Pollution Control Federation. 1986. Removal of Hazardous Wastes in Wastewater Facilities—Halogenated Organics. Manual of Practice FD-11, Water Pollution Control Fed., Alexandria, Va.

1060 B. Collection of Samples

1. Types of Samples

a. Grab samples: Grab samples are single samples collected at a specific spot at a site over a short period of time (typically seconds or minutes). Thus, they represent a "snapshot" in both space and time of a sampling area. Discrete grab samples are taken at a selected location, depth, and time. Depth-integrated grab samples are collected over a predetermined part or the entire depth of a water column, at a selected location and time in a given body of water.

A sample can represent only the composition of its source at the time and place of collection. However, when a source is known to be relatively constant in composition over an extended time or over substantial distances in all directions, then the sample may represent a longer time period and/or a larger volume than the specific time and place at which it was collected. In such circumstances, a source may be represented adequately by single grab samples. Examples are protected groundwater supplies, water supplies receiving conventional treatment, some well-mixed surface waters, but rarely, wastewater streams, rivers, large lakes, shorelines, estuaries, and groundwater plumes.

When a source is known to vary with time, grab samples collected at suitable intervals and analyzed separately can document the extent, frequency, and duration of these variations. Choose sampling intervals on the basis of the expected frequency of changes, which may vary from as little as 5 min to as long as 1 h or more. Seasonal variations in natural systems may necessitate sampling over months. When the source composition varies in space (i.e., from location to location) rather than time, collect samples from appropriate locations that will meet the objectives of the study (for example, upstream and downstream from a point source, etc.).

The same principles apply to sampling wastewater sludges, sludge banks, and muds, although these matrices are not specifically addressed in this section. Take every possible precaution to obtain a representative sample or one conforming to a sampling program.

b. Composite samples: Composite samples should provide a more representative sampling of heterogeneous matrices in which the concentration of the analytes of interest may vary over short periods of time and/or space. Composite samples can be obtained by combining portions of multiple grab samples or by using specially designed automatic sampling devices. Sequential (time) composite samples are collected by using continuous, constant sample pumping or by mixing equal water volumes collected at regular time intervals. Flow-proportional composites are collected by continuous pumping at a rate proportional to the flow, by mixing equal volumes of water collected at time intervals that are inversely proportional to the volume of flow, or by mixing volumes of water proportional to the flow collected during or at regular time intervals.

Advantages of composite samples include reduced costs of analyzing a large number of samples, more representative samples of heterogeneous matrices, and larger sample sizes when amounts of test samples are limited. Disadvantages of composite samples include loss of analyte relationships in individual samples, potential dilution of analytes below detection levels, increased potential analytical interferences, and increased possibility of analyte interactions. In addition, use of composite samples may reduce the number of samples analyzed below the required statistical need for specified data quality objectives or project-specific objectives.

Do not use composite samples with components or characteristics subject to significant and unavoidable changes during storage. Analyze individual samples as soon as possible after collection and preferably at the sampling point. Examples are dissolved gases, residual chlorine, soluble sulfide, temperature, and pH. Changes in components such as dissolved oxygen or carbon dioxide, pH, or temperature may produce secondary changes in certain inorganic constituents such as iron, manganese, alkalinity, or hardness. Some organic analytes also may be changed by changes in the foregoing components. Use time-composite samples only for determining components that can be demonstrated to remain unchanged under the conditions of sample collection, preservation, and storage.

Collect individual portions in a wide-mouth bottle every hour (in some cases every half hour or even every 5 min) and mix at the end of the sampling period or combine in a single bottle as collected. If preservatives are used, add them to the sample bottle initially so that all portions of the composite are preserved as soon as collected.

Automatic sampling devices are available; however, do not use them unless the sample is preserved as described below. Com-

posite samplers running for extended periods (weeks to months) should undergo routine cleaning of containers and sample lines to minimize sample growth and deposits.

c. Integrated (discharge-weighted) samples: For certain purposes, the information needed is best provided by analyzing mixtures of grab samples collected from different points simultaneously, or as nearly so as possible, using discharge-weighted methods such as equal-width increment (EWI) or equal discharge-increment (EDI) procedures and equipment. An example of the need for integrated sampling occurs in a river or stream that varies in composition across its width and depth. To evaluate average composition or total loading, use a mixture of samples representing various points in the cross-section, in proportion to their relative flows. The need for integrated samples also may exist if combined treatment is proposed for several separate wastewater streams, the interaction of which may have a significant effect on treatability or even on composition. Mathematical prediction of the interactions among chemical components may be inaccurate or impossible and testing a suitable integrated sample may provide more useful information.

Both lakes and reservoirs show spatial variations of composition (depth and horizontal location). However, there are conditions under which neither total nor average results are especially useful, but local variations are more important. In such cases, examine samples separately (i.e., do not integrate them).

Preparation of integrated samples usually requires equipment designed to collect a sample water uniformly across the depth profile. Knowledge of the volume, movement, and composition of the various parts of the water being sampled usually is required. Collecting integrated samples is a complicated and specialized process that must be described adequately in a sampling plan.

2. Chain-of-Custody Procedures

Properly designed and executed chain-of-custody forms will ensure sample integrity from collection to data reporting. This includes the ability to trace possession and handling of the sample from the time of collection through analysis and final disposition. This process is referred to as "chain-of-custody" and is required to demonstrate sample control when the data are to be used for regulation or litigation. Where litigation is not involved, chain-of-custody procedures are useful for routine control of samples.

A sample is considered to be under a person's custody if it is in the individual's physical possession, in the individual's sight, secured and tamper-proofed by that individual, or secured in an area restricted to authorized personnel. The following procedures summarize the major aspects of chain of custody. More detailed discussions are available.[1,2]

a. Sample labels (including bar-code labels): Use labels to prevent sample misidentification. Gummed paper labels or tags generally are adequate. Include at least the following information: a unique sample number, sample type, name of collector, date and time of collection, place of collection, and sample preservative. Also include date and time of preservation for comparison to date and time of collection. Affix tags or self-adhesive labels to sample containers before, or at the time of, sample collection.

b. Sample seals: Use sample seals to detect unauthorized tampering with samples up to the time of analysis. Use self-adhesive paper seals that include at least the following information: sample number (identical with number on sample label), collector's name, and date and time of sampling. Plastic shrink seals also may be used.

Attach seal in such a way that it is necessary to break it to open the sample container or the sample shipping container (e.g., a cooler). Affix seal to container before sample leaves custody of sampling personnel.

c. Field log book: Record all information pertinent to a field survey or sampling in a bound log book. As a minimum, include the following in the log book: purpose of sampling; location of sampling point; name and address of field contact; producer of material being sampled and address, if different from location; type of sample; and method, date, and time of preservation. If the sample is wastewater, identify process producing waste stream. Also provide suspected sample composition, including concentrations; number and volume of sample(s) taken; description of sampling point and sampling method; date and time of collection; collector's sample identification number(s); sample distribution and how transported; references such as maps or photographs of the sampling site; field observations and measurements; and signatures of personnel responsible for observations. Because sampling situations vary widely, it is essential to record sufficient information so that one could reconstruct the sampling event without reliance on the collector's memory. Protect log book and keep it in a safe place.

d. Chain-of-custody record: Fill out a chain-of-custody record to accompany each sample or group of samples. The record includes the following information: sample number; signature of collector; date, time, and address of collection; sample type; sample preservation requirements; signatures of persons involved in the chain of possession; and inclusive dates and times of possession.

e. Sample analysis request sheet: The sample analysis request sheet accompanies samples to the laboratory. The collector completes the field portion of such a form that includes most of the pertinent information noted in the log book. The laboratory portion of such a form is to be completed by laboratory personnel and includes: name of person receiving the sample, laboratory sample number, date of sample receipt, condition of each sample (i.e., if it is cold or warm, whether the container is full or not, color, if more than one phase is present, etc.), and determinations to be performed.

f. Sample delivery to the laboratory: Deliver sample(s) to laboratory as soon as practicable after collection, typically within 2 d. Where shorter sample holding times are required, make special arrangements to insure timely delivery to the laboratory. Where samples are shipped by a commercial carrier, include the waybill number in the sample custody documentation. Insure that samples are accompanied by a completed chain-of-custody record and a sample analysis request sheet. Deliver sample to sample custodian.

g. Receipt and logging of sample: In the laboratory, the sample custodian inspects the condition and seal of the sample and reconciles label information and seal against the chain-of-custody record before the sample is accepted for analysis. After acceptance, the custodian assigns a laboratory number, logs sample in the laboratory log book and/or computerized laboratory information management system, and stores it in a secured storage room or cabinet or refrigerator at the specified temperature until it is assigned to an analyst.

h. Assignment of sample for analysis: The laboratory supervisor usually assigns the sample for analysis. Once the sample is in

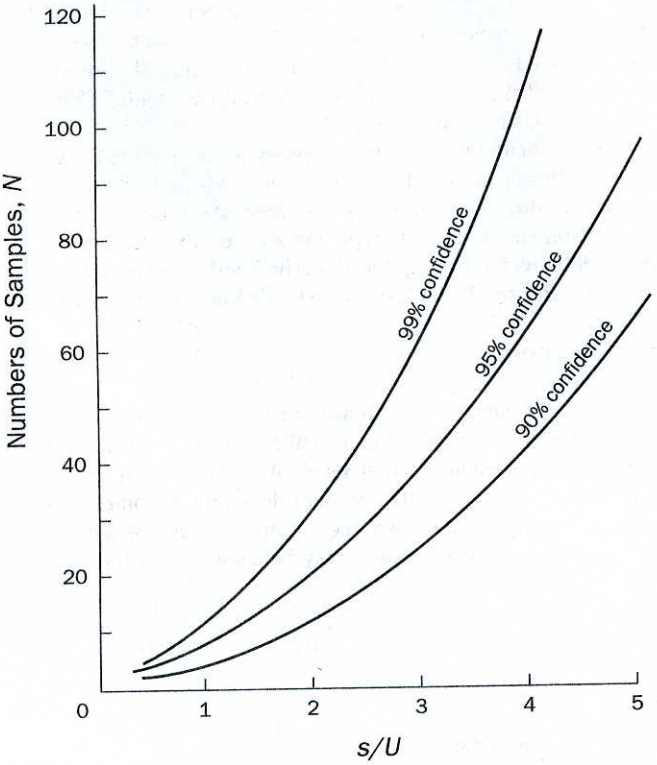


Figure 1060:1. Approximate number of samples required in estimating a mean concentration. Source: Methods for the Examination of Waters and Associated Materials: General Principles of Sampling and Accuracy of Results. 1980. Her Majesty's Stationery Off., London, England.

not included. Preferably, determine and use SDs or RSDs from overall sampling and analysis operations.

For estimates of numbers of samples needed for systematic sampling (e.g., drilling wells for sampling groundwater or for systematically sampling large water bodies such as lakes), equations are available[7] that relate number of samples to shape of grid, area covered, and space between nodes of grid. The grid spacing is a complex calculation that depends on the size and shape of any contaminated spot (such as a groundwater plume) to be identified, in addition to the geometric shape of the sampling grid.

See individual methods for types and numbers of quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) samples, e.g., for normal-level (procedural) or low-level (contamination) bias or for precision, involving sampling or laboratory analysis (either overall or individually). Estimates of numbers of QC samples needed to achieve specified confidence levels also can be calculated. Rates of false positives (Type I error) and false negatives (Type II error) are useful parameters for estimating required numbers of QC samples. A false positive is the incorrect conclusion that an analyte is present when it is absent. A false negative is the incorrect conclusion that an analyte is absent when it is present. If the frequency of false positives or false negatives desired to be detected is less than 10%, then

$$n = \frac{\ln \alpha}{\ln (1 - Y)}$$

where:

α = (1 − desired confidence level), and
Y = frequency to detect (<10%).

If the frequency that is desirable to detect is more than 10%, iterative solution of a binomial equation is necessary.[5,8]

Equations are available as a computer program† for computing sample number by the Z distribution, for estimating samples needed in systematic sampling, and for estimating required number of QC samples.

6. Sample Volumes

Collect a 1-L sample for most physical and chemical analyses. For certain determinations, larger samples may be necessary. Table 1060:I lists volumes ordinarily required for analyses, but it is strongly recommended that the laboratory that will conduct the analyses also be consulted to verify the analytical needs of sampling procedures as they pertain to the goals and data quality objective of an investigation.

Do not use samples from the same container for multiple testing requirements (e.g., organic, inorganic, radiological, bacteriological, and microscopic examinations) because methods of collecting and handling are different for each type of test. Always collect enough sample volume in the appropriate container in order to comply with sample handling, storage, and preservation requirements.

7. References

1. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1986. Test Methods for Evaluating Solid Waste: Physical/Chemical Methods, 3rd ed. Publ. No. SW-846, Off. Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Washington, D.C.
2. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1982. NEIC Policies and Procedures. EPA-330/9/78/001/-R (rev. 1982).
3. Water Pollution Control Federation. 1986. Removal of Hazardous Wastes in Wastewater Facilities—Halogenated Organics. Manual of Practice FD-11, Water Pollution Control Fed., Alexandria, Va.
4. Methods for the Examination of Waters and Associated Materials: General Principles of Sampling and Accuracy of Results. 1980. Her Majesty's Stationery Off., London, England.
5. Keith, L.H., G.L. Patton, D.L. Lewis & P.G. Edwards. 1996. Determining numbers and kinds of analytical samples. Chapter 1 *in* Principles of Environmental Sampling, 2nd ed. ACS Professional Reference Book, American Chemical Soc., Washington, D.C.
6. Keith, L.H. 1996. Compilation of EPA's Sampling and Analysis Methods, 2nd ed. Lewis Publ./CRC Press, Boca Raton, Fla.
7. Gilbert, R.O. 1987. Statistical Methods for Environmental Pollution Monitoring. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, N.Y.
8. Grant, E.L. & R.S. Leavenworth. 1988. Statistical Quality Control, 6th ed. McGraw-Hill, Inc., New York, N.Y.
9. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1996. 40 CFR Part 136, Table II.
10. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1992. Rules and Regulations. 40 CFR Parts 100-149.

† DQO-PRO, available (free) by downloading from American Chemical Society Division of Environmental Chemistry home page at http://acs.environmental.duq.edu/acsenv/envchem.htm, and also as part of the tutorial, Reliable Environmental Sampling and Analysis, Instant Reference Sources, Inc., http://instantref.com/inst.ref.htm.

TABLE 1060:I. SUMMARY OF SPECIAL SAMPLING AND HANDLING REQUIREMENTS*

Determination	Container†	Minimum Sample Size *mL*	Sample Type‡	Preservation§	Maximum Storage Recommended	Regulatory‖
Acidity	P, G(B)	100	g	Refrigerate	24 h	14 d
Alkalinity	P, G	200	g	Refrigerate	24 h	14 d
BOD	P, G	1000	g, c	Refrigerate	6 h	48 h
Boron	P (PTFE) or quartz	1000	g, c	HNO_3 to pH <2	28 d	6 months
Bromide	P, G	100	g, c	None required	28 d	28 d
Carbon, organic, total	G (B)	100	g, c	Analyze immediately; or refrigerate and add HCl, H_3PO_4, or H_2SO_4 to pH <2	7 d	28 d
Carbon dioxide	P, G	100	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	N.S.
COD	P, G	100	g, c	Analyze as soon as possible, or add H_2SO_4 to pH <2; refrigerate	7 d	28 d
Chloride	P, G	50	g, c	None required	N.S.	28 d
Chlorine, total, residual	P, G	500	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	0.25 h
Chlorine dioxide	P, G	500	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	N.S.
Chlorophyll	P, G	500	g	Unfiltered, dark, 4°C	24–48 h	
				Filtered, dark, −20°C (Do not store in frost-free freezer)	28 d	
Color	P, G	500	g, c	Refrigerate	48 h	48 h
Specific conductance	P, G	500	g, c	Refrigerate	28 d	28 d
Cyanide						
Total	P, G	1000	g, c	Add NaOH to pH >12, refrigerate in dark#	24 h	14 d; 24 h if sulfide present
Amenable to chlorination	P, G	1000	g, c	Add 0.6 g ascorbic acid if chlorine is present and refrigerate	stat	14 d; 24 h if sulfide present
Fluoride	P	100	g, c	None required	28 d	28 d
Hardness	P, G	100	g, c	Add HNO_3 or H_2SO_4 to pH <2	6 months	6 months
Iodine	P, G	500	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	N.S.
Metals, general	P(A), G(A)	1000	g, c	For dissolved metals filter immediately, add HNO_3 to pH <2	6 months	6 months
Chromium VI	P(A), G(A)	1000	g	Refrigerate	24 h	24 h
Copper by colorimetry*			g, c			
Mercury	P(A), G(A)	1000	g, c	Add HNO_3 to pH <2, 4°C, refrigerate	28 d	28 d
Nitrogen						
Ammonia	P, G	500	g, c	Analyze as soon as possible or add H_2SO_4 to pH <2, refrigerate	7 d	28 d
Nitrate	P, G	100	g, c	Analyze as soon as possible; refrigerate	48 h	48 h (28 d for chlorinated samples)
Nitrate + nitrite	P, G	200	g, c	Add H_2SO_4 to pH <2, refrigerate	1–2 d	28 d
Nitrite	P, G	100	g, c	Analyze as soon as possible; refrigerate	none	48 h
Organic, Kjeldahl*	P, G	500	g, c	Refrigerate, add H_2SO_4 to pH <2	7 d	28 d
Odor	G	500	g	Analyze as soon as possible; refrigerate	6 h	N.S.
Oil and grease	G, wide-mouth calibrated	1000	g	Add HCl or H_2SO_4 to pH <2, refrigerate	28 d	28 d
Organic compounds						
MBAs	P, G	250	g, c	Refrigerate	48 h	N.S.
Pesticides*	G(S), PTFE-lined cap	1000	g, c	Refrigerate, add 1000 mg ascorbic acid/L if residual chlorine present	7 d	7 d until extraction; 40 d after extraction
Phenols	P, G, PTFE-lined cap	500	g, c	Refrigerate, add H_2SO_4 to pH <2	*	28 d until extraction
Purgeables* by purge and trap	G, PTFE-lined cap	2 × 40	g	Refrigerate; add HCl to pH <2; add 1000 mg ascorbic acid/L if residual chlorine present	7 d	14 d

TABLE 1060:I. CONT.

Determination	Container†	Minimum Sample Size *mL*	Sample Type‡	Preservation§	Maximum Storage Recommended	Regulatory‖
Base/neutrals & acids	G(S) amber	1000	g, c	Refrigerate	7 d	7 d until extraction; 40 d after extraction
Oxygen, dissolved	G, BOD bottle	300	g			
Electrode				Analyze immediately	0.25 h	0.25 h
Winkler				Titration may be delayed after acidification	8 h	8 h
Ozone	G	1000	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	N.S.
pH	P, G	50	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	0.25 h
Phosphate	G(A)	100	g	For dissolved phosphate filter immediately; refrigerate	48 h	N.S.
Phosphorus, total	P, G	100	g, c	Add H_2SO_4 to pH <2 and refrigerate	28 d	N.S.
Salinity	G, wax seal	240	g	Analyze immediately or use wax seal	6 months	28 d
Silica	P (PTFE) or quartz	200	g, c	Refrigerate, do not freeze	28 d	28 d
Sludge digester gas	G, gas bottle	—	g	—	N.S.	
Solids[9]	P, G	200	g, c	Refrigerate	7 d	2–7 d; see cited reference
Sulfate	P, G	100	g, c	Refrigerate	28 d	28 d
Sulfide	P, G	100	g, c	Refrigerate; add 4 drops 2*N* zinc acetate/100 mL; add NaOH to pH >9	28 d	7 d
Temperature	P, G	—	g	Analyze immediately	0.25 h	0.25 h
Turbidity	P, G	100	g, c	Analyze same day; store in dark up to 24 h, refrigerate	24 h	48 h

* For determinations not listed, use glass or plastic containers; preferably refrigerate during storage and analyze as soon as possible.
† P = plastic (polyethylene or equivalent); G = glass; G(A) or P(A) = rinsed with 1 + 1 HNO_3; G(B) = glass, borosilicate; G(S) = glass, rinsed with organic solvents or baked.
‡ g = grab; c = composite.
§ Refrigerate = storage at 4°C ± 2°C; in the dark; analyze immediately = analyze usually within 15 min of sample collection.
‖ See citation[10] for possible differences regarding container and preservation requirements. N.S. = not stated in cited reference; stat = no storage allowed; analyze immediately.
If sample is chlorinated, see text for pretreatment.

1060 C. Sample Storage and Preservation

Complete and unequivocal preservation of samples, whether domestic wastewater, industrial wastes, or natural waters, is a practical impossibility because complete stability for every constituent never can be achieved. At best, preservation techniques only retard chemical and biological changes that inevitably continue after sample collection.

1. Sample Storage before Analysis

a. Nature of sample changes: Some determinations are more affected by sample storage than others. Certain cations are subject to loss by adsorption on, or ion exchange with, the walls of glass containers. These include aluminum, cadmium, chromium, copper, iron, lead, manganese, silver, and zinc, which are best collected in a separate clean bottle and acidified with nitric acid to a pH below 2.0 to minimize precipitation and adsorption on container walls. Also, some organics may be subject to loss by adsorption to the walls of glass containers.

Temperature changes quickly; pH may change significantly in a matter of minutes; dissolved gases (oxygen, carbon dioxide) may be lost. Because changes in such basic water quality properties may occur so quickly, determine temperature, reduction-oxidation potential, and dissolved gases in situ and pH, specific conductance, turbidity, and alkalinity immediately after sample collection. Many organic compounds are sensitive to changes in pH and/or temperature resulting in reduced concentrations during storage.

Changes in the pH-alkalinity-carbon dioxide balance may cause calcium carbonate to precipitate, decreasing the values for calcium and total hardness.

Iron and manganese are readily soluble in their lower oxidation states but relatively insoluble in their higher oxidation states;

therefore, these cations may precipitate or they may dissolve from a sediment, depending on the redox potential of the sample. Microbiological activity may affect the nitrate-nitrite-ammonia content, phenol or BOD concentration, or the reduction of sulfate to sulfide. Residual chlorine is reduced to chloride. Sulfide, sulfite, ferrous iron, iodide, and cyanide may be lost through oxidation. Color, odor, and turbidity may increase, decrease, or change in quality. Sodium, silica, and boron may be leached from the glass container. Hexavalent chromium may be reduced to trivalent chromium.

Biological activity taking place in a sample may change the oxidation state of some constituents. Soluble constituents may be converted to organically bound materials in cell structures, or cell lysis may result in release of cellular material into solution. The well-known nitrogen and phosphorus cycles are examples of biological influences on sample composition.

Zero head-space is important in preservation of samples with volatile organic compounds and radon. Avoid loss of volatile materials by collecting sample in a completely filled container. Achieve this by carefully filling the bottle so that top of meniscus is above the top of the bottle rim. It is important to avoid spillage or air entrapment if preservatives such as HCl or ascorbic acid have already been added to the bottle. After capping or sealing bottle, check for air bubbles by inverting and gently tapping it; if one or more air bubbles are observed then, if practical, discard the sample and repeat refilling bottle with new sample until no air bubbles are observed (this cannot be done if bottle contained preservatives before it was filled).

Serum vials with septum caps are particularly useful in that a sample portion for analysis can be taken through the cap by using a syringe,[1] although the effect of pressure reduction in the headspace must be considered. Pulling a sample into a syringe under vacuum can result in low bias data for volatile compounds and the resulting headspace precludes taking further subsamples.

b. Time interval between collection and analysis: In general, the shorter the time that elapses between collection of a sample and its analysis, the more reliable will be the analytical results. For certain constituents and physical values, immediate analysis in the field is required. For composited samples it is common practice to use the time at the end of composite collection as the sample collection time.

Check with the analyzing laboratory to determine how much elapsed time may be allowed between sample collection and analysis; this depends on the character of the sample and the stability of the target analytes under the conditions of storage. Many regulatory methods limit the elapsed time between sample collection and analysis (see Table 1060:I). Changes caused by growth of microorganisms are greatly retarded by keeping the sample at a low temperature (<4°C but above freezing). When the interval between sample collection and analysis is long enough to produce changes in either the concentration or the physical state of the constituent to be measured, follow the preservation practices given in Table 1060:I. Record time elapsed between sampling and analysis, and which preservative, if any, was added.

2. Preservation Techniques

To minimize the potential for volatilization or biodegradation between sampling and analysis, keep samples as cool as possible without freezing. Preferably pack samples in crushed or cubed ice or commercial ice substitutes before shipment. Avoid using dry ice because it will freeze samples and may cause glass containers to break. Dry ice also may effect a pH change in samples. Keep composite samples cool with ice or a refrigeration system set at 4°C during compositing. Analyze samples as quickly as possible on arrival at the laboratory. If immediate analysis is not possible, preferably store at 4°C.[1]

No single method of preservation is entirely satisfactory; choose the preservative with due regard to the determinations to be made. Use chemical preservatives only when they do not interfere with the analysis being made. When they are used, add them to the sample bottle initially so that all sample portions are preserved as soon as collected. Because a preservation method for one determination may interfere with another one, samples for multiple determinations may need to be split and preserved separately. All methods of preservation may be inadequate when applied to suspended matter. Do not use formaldehyde as a preservative for samples collected for chemical analysis because it affects many of the target analytes.

Methods of preservation are relatively limited and are intended generally to retard biological action, retard hydrolysis of chemical compounds and complexes, and reduce volatility of constituents.

Preservation methods are limited to pH control, chemical addition, the use of amber and opaque bottles, refrigeration, filtration, and freezing. Table 1060:I lists preservation methods by constituent. See Section 7010B for sample collection and preservation requirements for radionuclides.

The foregoing discussion is by no means exhaustive and comprehensive. Clearly it is impossible to prescribe absolute rules for preventing all possible changes. Additional advice will be found in the discussions under individual determinations, but to a large degree the dependability of an analytical determination rests on the experience and good judgment of the person collecting the sample. Numbers of samples required for confidence levels in data quality objectives, however, rely on statistical equations such as those discussed earlier.

3. Reference

1. WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FEDERATION. 1986. Removal of Hazardous Wastes in Wastewater Facilities—Halogenated Organics. Manual of Practice FD-11, Water Pollution Control Fed., Alexandria, Va.

4. Bibliography

KEITH, L.H., ed. 1996. Principles of Environmental Sampling, 2nd ed. ACS Professional Reference Book, American Chemical Soc., Washington, D.C.